

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)

Technical Specifications: Vocational Evaluations

Effective July 1, 2004

A. Service Definition:

Vocational evaluation services provide an individualized, timely, and systematic process by which a person seeking employment, in partnership with an evaluator, learns to identify viable vocational options and develop employment goals and objectives. The purpose of vocational evaluation is to assist DVR consumers, when necessary, to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Vocational evaluations should not be used when a trial period with outcome expectations can be incorporated as a service in the IPE.

B. Applicable National Standards:

The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) standards and Commission on Certification of Work Adjustment and Vocational Evaluation Specialists (CCWAVES) professional standards were reviewed as general references for the development of these standards.

C. Process Standards:

1. Comprehensive vocational evaluation services have the capability to assess or obtain the following information:
 - a. Ability to learn about oneself as a result of the information obtained and furnished through the evaluation experience.
 - b. Achievements, e.g., educational and vocational achievements.
 - c. Assistive technology and reasonable accommodations needed.
 - d. Community and employment supports needed.
 - e. Environmental conditions needed.
 - f. The need for tool and job-site modifications or adaptive equipment that may enhance the employability of the persons receiving services when their disabilities may invalidate otherwise standardized procedures.
 - g. Work and non-work needs.
 - h. Independent living skills.
 - i. Intellectual capacities.
 - j. Interests, aptitudes and career aspirations.
 - k. Job-seeking and job-keeping skills.
 - l. Knowledge of occupational information.
 - m. Learning styles, including ability to understand, recall and respond to various types of instructions.
 - n. Loss of access to the labor market and/or loss of earning capacity.
 - o. Personal, social and work-related behaviors.
 - p. Physical and psychomotor capacities.
 - q. Possible employment objectives.
 - r. Transferable skills.
 - s. Work skills and tolerances.
 - t. Modes of communication.

Services do not have to assess the person's functioning in all of these areas. The needs of the consumer dictate the areas in which assessment is done.

2. An individual written evaluation plan is developed in a timely manner for each person receiving a work sample or on-the-job assessment and is based on:
 - a. Referral information.
 - b. Referral questions.
 - c. The initial interview.
 - d. The stated overall purpose of the evaluation.
 - e. Personal preferences.
 - f. The person seeking employment and the evaluator prepares the plan.
3. One or more of the following techniques are used to provide comprehensive vocational evaluation services:
 - a. Work samples – from two to five days maximum.
 - b. On-the-job assessments.
 - c. Psychometric testing – less than two days.

The techniques used are based on the local job market, the characteristics of consumers being evaluated and the personnel needs of employers. Follow-up information can also be an asset in determining the most efficient and effective evaluation techniques. A comprehensive vocational evaluation includes opportunities for the consumer to learn about job requirements and how they compare to other evaluation findings.

4. When **work samples** are used, written instructions specify:
 - a. The materials used.
 - b. The equipment used.
 - c. The layout.
 - d. Methods for administration.
 - e. Interpretation of scoring.

Work samples must have established adequate reliability and validity to measure the skills and aptitudes they claim to assess. Some work samples may require the use of assistive technology or reasonable accommodations in the materials and equipment used, methods for giving instructions and safety precautions.

5. When **on-the-job evaluations** are used, they are evaluated as to their appropriateness for the persons receiving services with regard to:
 - a. Relevance to the consumer's tentative vocational interests.
 - b. Adequacy of supervision.
 - c. Safety.
 - d. Specific work-site requirements.
 - e. Potential job accommodations.
 - f. Accessibility issues (physical, attitudinal, communication or transportation barriers).
 - g. Expectations for quality and quantity of work.
 - h. The physical demands of the job.
 - i. The tasks and demands related to the goals of the on-the-job assessments.
 - j. Other issues, as appropriate, to the persons seeking employment.

On-the-job evaluations are located outside the provider organization. At such locations, the person is given the opportunity to experience the requirements of the actual job and the job-site supervisor conducts the evaluation. The organization should ensure that Department of Labor guidelines for paid work are followed

6. When **psychometric testing** is used, it is done under the supervision of an individual who meets the qualifications defined by state law and by the American Psychological Association. Psychometric assessments may include test scores only or may include a comprehensive evaluation report.

D. Outcome Standards:

Vocational evaluation outcomes are the consumer's gain in knowledge about themselves in relation to the world of work and the reports generated from completed assessments. The reports are either a series of test scores from a limited psychometric assessment or a comprehensive evaluation report, customized to meet the needs of the consumer, for all the other types of evaluation.

E. Reporting Standards:

Reports are due to the referring DVR staff within 10 working days of completion of the evaluation in an electronic format compatible with Microsoft Word and Windows operating systems.

The information in each comprehensive evaluation report:

1. Answers the referral questions.
2. Is shared with the person seeking employment.
3. Is required for DVR billing and verification of service provision.
4. Is relevant to the desired employment outcome.

The comprehensive evaluation report includes, as appropriate to the consumer's needs, independent living considerations; behavior observations; proposed reasonable accommodations; recommendations for assistive technology; assessed interests, aptitudes and abilities; and specific vocational recommendations or career options based on the local job market skills transfer analysis and skills transfer analysis. The report includes the consumer's stated interests and goals at the completion of the evaluation and the evaluator's recommendations regarding the steps needed for the consumer to prepare for and obtain their job goals.

The report is shared in an understandable manner with consumer. This may mean some additional explanations and supports are necessary for comprehension and retention; e.g., the person might desire to have a personal advocate in attendance. The recommended method of sharing evaluation information with the consumer is a face-to-face staffing including, at a minimum, the consumer, DVR staff and evaluator.